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SOVIET PAPERS SCORE INDIFFERENCE TOWARD SCRAP DRIVES

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources. 7

Soviet scrap-collection agencies have been consistent in their failure to organize and exploit scrap drives, according to a half-page diatribe in the 6 June 1953 issue of Pravda.

The paper termed scrap metal a prime element in steel production, and warned that a scrap shortage not only might bring Soviet steel production to a standstill, but might cripple the entire national economy as well.

Pravda then deplored the fact that Soviet scrap drives have "wallowed in a morass of bureaucratic apathy and public indifference". It asserted that scrap collections must not be relegated to a position of secondary importance and suggested that perhaps the greatest fault was in understressing the need for proper organization on the plant level.

The paper then cautioned Soviet plant directors that scrap drives are terminated not by collection but rather by utilization of the scrap. It charged that there have been all too many instances of scrap metal being used to grade roads and to build bulky, unsightly fences, and stated that such irrational and irresponsible acts must cease forthwith.

Moreover, Pravda continued, a quality control should be instituted to facilitate scrap collection and distribution; plants and factories having a large scrap output should grade their scrap according to size.

Pravda concluded by stating that the USSR is capable of topping its scrap-drive norms, terming this a matter of record. It called on all workers, farmers, and plant managers to do their part toward a successful scrap-collection program.(1)

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Uzbek SSR

According to Pravda Vostoka of 19 March 1953, the Uzbek Metallurgical Plant receives both ferrous and nonferrous scrap. In 1951, it had a surplus of 52.5 tons of nonferrous scrap which it sent to "Glavvtortsvetmet" (Main Administration of Nonferrous Scrap Metal). In 1952, only 17 tons were shipped, while this year "Glavvtortsvetmet" had not received even one kilogram of scrap by 19 March.(2)

Pravda Vostoka of 16 December 1952 reported that the production schedule of the Uzbek Plant's open-hearth shop was threatened by a scrap shortage.

In November 1952, it stated, the furnaces lay idle for 100 hours. Such enforced inactivity exacted a considerable toll in expensive materials (e.g. pig iron, mazut, refractories) and manpower. The paper declared that this stark inefficiency was attributable directly to the plant's scrap suppliers, who had not maintained their delivery schedules and had shipped unsorted and ungraded scrap. The Uzbek Office of "Glavvtorchernet" (Main Administration of Ferrous Scrap Metal), the principal supplier, met only 50 percent of its October 1952 norm and achieved an even poorer record the following month.(3)

Moscow City and Oblast

Moskovskaya Pravda of 12 June 1952 reported a projected scrap drive for combing Moscow City for all available scrap. The paper stated that there were innumerable scrap piles in Moscow plants, railroad yards, and private homes, and even an old broken down bridge which had been rusting since 1910.

Industrial plants, according to the paper, were scheduled to start grading their scrap. Many machine-building plants had been making no distinction between carbon and alloy steel scrap and, as a result, titanium, nickel, tungsten, molybdenum, and other valuable alloying elements had been lost.(9)

According to Moskovskaya Pravda of 20 March 1953, the "Elektrostal" Plant has not been receiving sufficient scrap. The plant requested 150 tons of high-speed steel tailings and 560 tons of substitute tailings for January and February 1953. The Technical Administration cut this order down to 95 and 460 tons, respectively, and even then did not fill the order. The "Glavvtorchernet" Moscow City and Moskovskaya Oblast administrations have also been guilty of similar inconsistencies, according to the paper.

Moskovskaya Pravda charged that this scrap shortage is often artificially induced. It stated that, for some obscure reason, the managers of these administrations tolerate the stockpiling of tens and hundreds of tons of quality steel tailings. The paper concluded with the statement that it was high time these superfluous reserves be depleted.(4)

Georgian SSR

In a scathing review of the Tbilisskaya Oblast scrap drives, Zarya Vostoka of 16 December 1952 reported that many of the rayons made an inexcusably poor showing. Akhalkalakiy Rayon, for example, fulfilled only 15.8 percent of its norm during the first 10 months of the annual scrap drive; Adigenskiy Rayon, only 35.3 percent; and Mtskhetskiy Rayon, 51.6 percent. The paper added that this record, however meager, was in sharp contrast to that of Aspindzskiy, Bogdanovskiy, Lagdekhskiy, and Telavskiy rayons, which had not even begun their scrap-collection drives.(5)

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Estonian SSR

Sovetskaya Estoniya of 24 December 1952 reported that the Estonian SSR had a generally good record in the second and third quarter 1952 scrap collections, with most of the cities and rayons exceeding their norms. The paper added, however, that some rayons should make more use of available resources for the collection and distribution of scrap.(6)

Ukrainian SSR

Pravda Ukrainy of 20 September 1952 reported that the Dnepropetrovsk Metallurgical Plant imeni Petrovsk recovered 146,680 tons of "lost" metal from tailings. The plant had pledged to recover 50,000 tons of scrap in 1952 and 60,000 tons in 1953.(7)

Moldavian SSR

According to Sovetskaya Moldaviya of 18 May 1952, the Moldavian SSR was resorting to cash awards in an effort to spur socialist competition in scrap collections.(8)

SOURCES

1. Moscow, Pravda, 6 Jun 53
2. Tashkent, Pravda Vostoka, 19 Mar 53
3. Ibid., 16 Dec 52
4. Moscow, Moskovskaya Pravda, 20 Mar 53
5. Tbilisi, Zarya Vostoka, 16 Dec 52
6. Tallin, Sovetskaya Estoniya, 24 Dec 52
7. Kiev, Pravda Ukrainy, 20 Sep 52
8. Kishinev, Sovetskaya Moldaviya, 18 May 52
9. Moskovskaya Pravda, 12 Jun 52

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